

Employee Housing Issues Specific to Big Sky

Challenges

Big Sky is not incorporated and lacks the tools other communities have to address housing for area employees and their families. Big Sky has limited amounts of private property due to being land-locked by the surrounding federal lands causing land prices to continue to escalate and making it improbable for the local work force to afford quality housing.

Housing Study

A study commissioned by the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce in the spring of 2014 documented:

- 83% of the employees commutes into work - most live an hour or more drive away;
- The Average Median Income (AMI) of Big Sky is \$58k/year;
- The Median Home Value (MHV) is \$380k-\$510k; and
- The ratio of MHV/AMI is 6.5 to 9 times versus an "affordable" ratio of 4 times.

This affordable housing study recommended a target of 630 to 670 more housing units to address the needs of **TODAY'S** employees.

Community Benefits

1. Sense of Community – Resident employees are invested in their communities, oftentimes becoming future leaders and volunteers for important civic organizations, churches and schools.
2. Business Employment Needs – Qualified labor is getting harder and harder to find. By creating housing options, employers can grow their businesses, creating more tax revenue for the State of Montana.
3. Schools and Emergency Services – Allows for attracting and retaining quality teachers and administrators, while emergency responders and law enforcement who live locally have quicker response times to calls for service.
4. Highway Safety – Highway 191 to Big Sky is one of the busiest and deadliest highways in the state. By allowing employees to live locally, traffic on HWY 191 will be minimized resulting in improved safety.

Process

If HB 262 is successful, it will be imperative to develop a local Housing Authority or Land Trust in Big Sky, with a detailed business plan to address the employee housing need. This would be accomplished in advance of requesting the voters within the Resort Tax District to vote for an increase.